

App. No. 10/063,929
Amendment dated August 12, 2004
Reply to Office action of May 14, 2004

REMARKS

Summary of Amendments

Claims 1, 2, 14-17, 26, 29 and 30 have been amended. Claims 1, 14, 16 and 29 have been amended in response to the rejection of claims 1 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Claims 2, 15, 17 and 30 have been amended in response to the objection made to claim 2. Claim 26 has been made at Applicant's own initiative.

Claims 6-10 and 21-25 have been canceled.

Election/Restriction

Applicant's election of species in its Reply filed April 9, 2004 was made without traverse. Because allowable subject matter has been indicated, in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion the non-elected claims, i.e., claims 6-10 and 21-25, have been canceled.

Drawings

A drawing replacement sheet attached to this paper corrects Fig. 1 by the addition of the legend "Prior Art" as required by the Examiner.

Claim Objections

It is believed that claim 2 was objected to primarily because of the grammatically incorrect phrase "according as its separation from." This phrase has been amended in each claim in which it appears—i.e., claims 2, 15, 17 and 30—to read "according as *it separates* from." The definition of "according as" intended here is the first given by *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language: Fourth Edition* (2000), "Corresponding to the way in which; precisely as."

In addition, the phrase "said sleeve along its outer circumferential surface being provided with a taper surface" has been amended to read "said sleeve along its outer circumferential *periphery* being provided with a taper surface" in order to avoid the awkwardness of saying that a "surface is provided with a surface."

Hence amended claims 2, 15, 17 and 30 may be construed as reciting

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said sleeve along its outer circumferential periphery being provided with a taper surface constricting in outer diameter *corresponding to the way in which* it separates from said rotor top plate.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-5 and 16-20 were rejected for lack of clarity in the recitation of "said bearing section" in the last line of claims 1 and 16.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's pointing out that the recitation "said bearing section" is unclear, because this problem is due to an error in translation.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite,

said rotor is lifted through cooperation of said thrust bearing section and said axial support section.

Support for reciting this configuration appears in paragraph [0015] in the Summary, as well as in paragraph [0062] of the Description in the present specification.

The corresponding recitations in claims 14, 16 and 29 have been amended likewise.

Further Amendment

Claim 26 has been amended at Applicant's own initiative so as to recite the cover member likewise recited in claim 16, the sister claim to claim 26, and to provide proper antecedent basis for the recitation "said oil" in the recitations of the thrust and radial bearing sections. No new matter has been added. Support for reciting this configuration appears in paragraphs [0032] and [0078] of the Description.

Allowable Subject Matter

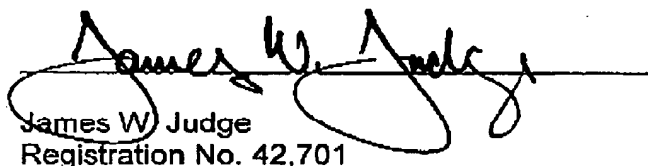
Applicant gratefully acknowledges that claims 11-15 and 26-30 are allowed, and that claims 1-5 and 16-20 were indicated as being allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. It is respectfully submitted that the present amendment meets this requirement.

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Accordingly, Applicant courteously urges that this application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is requested. Favorable action by the Examiner at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

August 12, 2004


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